

28/05/2017

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
455 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20544

RE: Restoring Internet Freedom, WC Docket No. 17-108

I am writing to implore you to retain net neutrality protections by keeping the current Title II classification of Internet Service Providers.

The internet throughout its existence has relied on net neutrality to allow competition to flourish. Recently, however, Internet Service Providers, have realised that by charging high fees for popular online services and threatening to throttle speeds if they do not pay up, they stand to make more profits.

This will only serve to increase prices for consumers and will lead to less competition, not more.

You have stated many times that the internet has flourished and become what it is **before** the current Title II classification of ISPs was introduced by previous Chairman Tom Wheeler.

This is true, but what is also true is that for most of the Internet's history, ISPs **did** adhere to net neutrality principles by treating all data as equal. Recently, however, they have realised the potential for more profits by acting in an extortionate manner towards popular online services.

Therefore, the FCC needs to step in and act on its duty and responsibility towards the public by retaining Title II classification and forcing ISPs – big oligopolies such as Comcast and AT & T as well as small rural ISPs I have not even heard of – to treat all data equally.

ISPs claim this will remove their incentive to invest in their networks. This is simply a threat.

They did not treat different sources of data differently for most of the internet's history and they still invested in their networks. This threat about not investing in their networks is simply about them being greedy for profits.

I urge you, as only the FCC can stop a disaster from happening, to ignore these false threats and instead appreciate how net neutrality has led to the flourishing of online services and intense competition among those services, e.g. between Google, Bing, Yahoo, Yandex and other search engines, between Amazon and eBay, Uber and Lyft, to name only a few.

Consider what might happen if net neutrality rules were removed. Google could potentially pay Comcast, AT & T and other networks to put data travelling between Google servers and client computers on a "fast lane", meaning if a **better search engine than Google** came along as a young start-up, they would not be able to compete as they would not be able to pay more than Google.

This would lead to the market for many online services such as search engines, online retailers, online entertainment providers (e.g. Netflix, Amazon Prime, YouTube, etc.) becoming more and more oligopolised or even monopolised, not less.

This would only make the wealthy corporations wealthier and make ordinary consumers – who the FCC should protect – pay higher prices for fewer options.

Again, I implore you to deeply consider the consequences of any action taken by the FCC, and to act in the best interests of the public rather than the corporations that provide internet access and manage networks.

28/05/2017

The internet has been one of the greatest inventions of mankind. Please do not let the opportunities it provides be restricted simply for profit-making.

I trust in your leadership and I very much hope you will retain Title II classification of ISPs and stick strongly to the principles of net neutrality.

Best wishes,

Hugh McConnor